

CLAIMS

It is claimed:

1. A method of delivering printed documents comprising
inputting a name of a destination user
inputting a network address corresponding to the name of the destination user
a reference step to select an image forming apparatus based upon information selected from the group comprising the name and the mail address
a distribution step to deliver the electronic data to the image forming apparatus selected by the reference step.
2. The method of delivering printed documents of claim 1 comprising setting up a lock code .
3. The method of delivering printed documents of claim 1 comprising setting up sending a notification mail which notifies that the electronic data has been transmitted to the mail address inputted at the mail address inputting step when delivering the electronic data to the selected image forming apparatus.
4. A printing program which delivers electronic data for printing, the program comprising
a function to input a name of a destination user to which a printed document from the electronic data is to be delivered

a function to input a network address corresponding to the name of the destination user

a function to select an image forming apparatus from information selected from the group comprising the name or the mail address

a function which delivers the electronic data to the selected image forming apparatus.

5. A method of delivering printed documents, the method comprising
receiving information about a print job to be printed, wherein the information identifies a user to receive a printed documents from the print job
selecting an image forming apparatus based upon information about the identified user, wherein the selection is made from a search of database, wherein the database associates plural image forming apparatuses with plural users
directing the print job to the selected image forming apparatus.
6. The method of directing print jobs of claim 5 wherein the information comprises the print job.
7. The method of directing print jobs of claim 5 further comprising, after the selecting step and before the directing step, requesting confirmation of the selected image forming apparatus and receiving a confirmation of the selected image forming apparatus.
8. The method of directing print jobs of claim 5 further comprising

in the selecting step, preparing a list of image forming apparatuses from the database, the list ranking the listed image forming apparatuses based upon the proximity of the listed image forming apparatuses to the identified user

after the selecting step, requesting selection of one of the image forming apparatuses from the list.

9. The method of directing print jobs of claim 5 further comprising notifying the selected user of the print job.

10. The method of directing print jobs of claim 9 wherein the notifying comprises sending a message to the user with information identifying the selected image forming apparatus.

11. The method of directing print jobs of claim 5 further comprising including a tracking identifier in the print job for identifying a printed document corresponding to the print job.

12. A method of delivering printed documents, the method comprising
receiving information about a print job to be printed, wherein the information
identifies a user to receive the print job

obtaining a network address of the identified user

selecting at least one of a plurality of image forming apparatuses having a network
address closest to the network address of the identified user

directing the print job to the selected image forming apparatus.

13. The method of delivering printed documents of claim 12 wherein the information comprises the print job.

14. The method of delivering printed documents, of claim 12 further comprising, after the selecting step and before the directing step, requesting confirmation of the selected image forming apparatus and receiving a confirmation of the selected image forming apparatus.

15. The method of delivering printed documents of claim 12 wherein the selecting step further includes searching a database, wherein the database associates plural image forming apparatuses having respective network addresses.

16. The method of delivering printed documents of claim 12 further comprising
in the selecting step, preparing a list of image forming apparatuses, the list ranking the listed image forming apparatuses based upon the proximity of the listed image forming apparatuses to the identified user

after the selecting step, requesting selection of one of the image-forming apparatuses from the list.

17. The method of delivering printed documents of claim 12 wherein
the network addresses comprises an IP address

closeness is determined based upon identity of subnets in the network addresses and closeness of host portions of the network addresses.

18. A storage medium comprising

a database stored on the storage medium which associates plural image forming apparatuses with plural users based upon proximity between the users and the image forming apparatuses

instructions stored on the storage medium which when executed by a processor cause the processor to perform actions comprising

receiving information about a print job to be printed, wherein the information identifies a user to receive a printed document from the print job

selecting one of the image forming apparatuses based upon information about the identified user

directing the print job to the selected image forming apparatus.

19. The storage medium of claim 17 wherein the information comprises the print job.

20. The storage medium of claim 17 further comprising instructions stored on the storage medium which when executed by the processor cause the processor to perform actions comprising requesting confirmation of the selected image forming apparatus and receiving a confirmation of the selected image forming apparatus.

21. The storage medium of claim 17 further comprising instructions stored on the storage medium which when executed by a processor cause the processor to perform actions comprising

preparing a list of image forming apparatuses from the database, the list ranking the listed image forming apparatuses based upon the proximity of the listed image forming apparatuses to the identified user

requesting selection of one of the image forming apparatuses from the list.

22. A workstation comprising the storage medium of claim 17.

23. A storage medium comprising

instructions stored on the storage medium which when executed by a processor cause the processor to perform actions comprising

receiving information about a print job to be printed, wherein the information identifies a user to receive the print job

obtaining a network address of the identified user

selecting at least one of a plurality of image forming apparatuses having a network address closest to the network address of the identified user

directing the print job to the selected image forming apparatus.

24. The storage medium of claim 23 wherein the information comprises the print job.

25. The storage medium of claim 23 further comprising instructions stored on the storage medium which when executed by the processor cause the processor to perform actions comprising requesting confirmation of the selected image forming apparatus and receiving a confirmation of the selected image forming apparatus.

26. The storage medium of claim 23 further comprising instructions stored on the storage medium which when executed by the processor cause the processor to perform actions comprising

preparing a list of image forming apparatuses, the list ranking the listed image forming apparatuses based upon the proximity of the listed image forming apparatuses to the identified user

requesting selection of one of the image forming apparatuses from the list.

27. A workstation comprising the storage medium of claim 23.